



News Release

Pat Quinn, Governor

Jay Rowell, Director

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Employment Data Available by Legislative District New Service Compares Districts, Improves Planning

CHICAGO – Economic data previously available only at the statewide level now is broken out by Congressional and Illinois Legislative districts in an effort to assist local economic planners and decision-makers, the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today.

“We work in a global economy, but the root of that system is planted in neighborhoods across our state,” IDES Director Jay Rowell said. “Data at this level will help decision-makers reach informed choices on how to shape their economy, address potential economic challenges and create jobs by recruiting employers.”

Six data points now are available by legislative district: Number of individuals receiving unemployment insurance; individuals qualifying for insurance for the first time; number of weeks of insurance that has been paid; number of claimants with a high school degree or below as well as college experience or above; age breakdowns by under 25, between 25 and 54, and over 54; and the number of Veterans receiving benefits.

Tracking at the legislative level can help planners, business leaders and others identify trends and evaluate how those trends might impact the local and regional areas. For example, an increase in the trend of first-time applicants for unemployment insurance could indicate possible economic hardship before it is felt in the community. Conversely, a decrease in first-time applicants, or a decrease in the average number of weeks of insurance that has been paid, could indicate economic growth. Data regarding age, education and Veteran status could identify areas for improvement or be used to convince a potential business that there is a ready-made workforce primed for their specific needs.

The data stems from information provided to the IDES by those receiving benefits. The numbers are reported on a four-week moving average to smooth weekly volatility, just as it is at the national level by the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics. This four-week moving average provides the most accurate snapshot.

Future data by legislative district will include the number of individuals using re-employment services.

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for counties, and cities greater than 25,000, has been available since 1974. The unemployment rate measures those who are out of work and looking for work, regardless if they receive unemployment insurance.

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